

Message Text

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20

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

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SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 AID-05 SAM-01 /082 W

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R 270817Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6797

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IR, IV

SUBJECT: PRINCESS ASHRAF'S TRIP TO IVORY COAST

REFERENCE (A) TEHRAN 12546, (B) FREETOWN 0165, (C) 75 ABIDJAN
8573(NOTAL)

1. IRANIAN PRINCESS ASHRAF PAID SIX-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO IVORY
COAST JAN. 20-25. GOIC RECEIVED THE PRINCESS WITH LAVISH
HOSPITALITY WHILE DETAILS OF THE VISIT DOMINATED THE MEDIA
BEGINNING WITH FULL FRONT-PAGE PHOTOGRAPH OF PRINCESS IN
FRATERNITE MATIN ON DAY OF ARRIVAL AND HEAVY COVERAGE THEREAFTER.

2. PROGRAM INCLUDED CALLS ON LEADING GOIC OFFICIALS AND IVORIAN
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION LEADERS AS WELL AS VISITS TO UNIVERSITY,
MUSEUM, NATIONAL BALLE, AND YAMOUSSOUKRO, PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-
BOIGNY'S HOME VILLAGE WHENCE THE PRINCESS DEPARTED IVORY COAST

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FOR GHANA.

3. THEME OF EXTRAVAGANT COVERAGE OF PRINCESS AND OF IRAN IN GOIC-CONTROLLED MEDIA WAS TO POINT OUT NUMEROUS SIMILARITIES BETWEEN IRAN AND IVORY COAST, SUCH AS THE CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS BOTH THIRD-WORLD COUNTRIES HAVE MADE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (FREQUENT REFERENCES TO THE "WHITE REVOLUTION" IN IRAN) AND MORE PARTICULARLY THE SIMILARITY OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHIES. BOUTH COUNTRIES, SAID THE LEAD EDITORIAL IN HEBDO, PARTY-CONTROLLED WEEKLY NEWSPAPER, BELIEVE IN ECONOMIC LIBERALISM AND FREE ENTERPRISE PLACED, HOWEVER, "UNDER THE DISCREET BUT FIRM SURVEILLANCE OF THE STATE." EDITORIAL ALSO DREW COMPARISON BETWEEN LEADERSHIP OF SHAN AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY.

4. COMMENT: IVORY COAST CLEARLY HOPES TO BENEFIT FROM CLOSER TIES WITH IRAN AS WAS OPENLY HINTED IN PRESS COVERAGE. TO THIS END IVORY COAST HAD ALREADY TAKEN SEVERAL STEPS IN 1975 INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS AND THE SIGNING OF A COMMERCIAL ACCORD (REF C). WHETHER THE PRINCESS'S TRIP WILL LEAD TO ANY CONCRETE RESULTS IN THE FIELD OF COOPERATION REMAINS TO BE SEEN BUT IN ANY EVENT HER VISIT WAS GENUINELY WELCOMED HERE. UNLIKE SIERRA LEONE (REF B), THE PRINCESS STUCK FAIRLY CLOSELY TO HER SCHEDULE AND NO REPORTS HAVE SURFACED YET OF HER BEING A DIFFICULT GUEST. ON DEPARTURE SHE WAS EFFUSIVE IN HER PRAISE FOR IVORY COAST HOSPITALITY. COOKE

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